

IN THE CLAIMS

The following claim set replaces all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) A method for removing excess fluid from a patient comprising the steps of:
 - a. inserting a withdrawal catheter into a first peripheral blood vessel in the patient;
 - b. removing/withdrawing blood directly from through the catheter in the a first peripheral blood vessel in the patient;
 - c. sensing a withdrawal pressure of the blood;
 - d. adjusting a withdrawal blood flow rate based on the sensed withdrawal pressure;
 - e**b.** filtering the removed/withdrawn blood through a filter to separate the excess fluid from the blood, wherein the filter has a filter membrane surface area of no greater than 0.2 m²;
 - f**e.** returning/infusing the filtered blood into a second peripheral blood vessel in the patient;
 - g**d.** wherein a blood flow through the filter is less than two percent of a total cardiac output of the patient, and a flow of the excess fluid removed from the blood is no greater than 1.0 liters per hour.

2. (Previously Presented) A method as in claim 1 wherein the excess fluid removed from the blood is no greater than 30 percent of a volume of the removed blood.
3. (Previously Presented) A method as in claim 1 wherein the step of filtering is performed by sieving the blood through a filter to remove excess fluid.
4. (Currently Amended) A method as in claim 1 further comprising the step of pumping the ~~removed~~ withdrawn blood with a blood pump at a rate of less than 100 milliliters (ml) per minute.
5. (Cancelled)
6. (Currently Amended) A method as in claim 1 wherein a rate of ~~the removal of~~ blood withdrawal is in a range of 40 to 60 milliliters per minute, and a rate of removal of the excess fluid is no greater than 16 milliliters per minute.
7. (Cancelled)
8. (Currently Amended) A method as in claim 4 wherein the blood pump stops upon detection of a blockage of blood flow in the blood being ~~removed in step (a)~~ withdrawn.
9. (Currently Amended) A method as in claim 1 wherein the blood pump stops upon detection of a air bubble in the withdrawn or filtered blood ~~during any of steps (a), (b) and (c).~~
10. (Original) A method as in claim 1 wherein the first peripheral blood vessel is a vein.

11. (Original) A method as in claim 1 wherein the second peripheral blood vessel is a vein.
12. (Original) A method as in claim 1 wherein the first and second peripheral blood vessel are the same vein.
13. (Original) A method as in claim 1 wherein the filter includes capillary, hollow fibers.
14. (Original) A method as in claim 13 wherein the hollow fibers have filtering pores which retain in the blood solutes greater than 50,000 Daltons.
15. (Original) A method as in claim 13 wherein the hollow fibers have blood passages of approximately 0.2 mm or less in diameter.
16. (Cancelled)
17. (Original) A method as in claim 1 wherein the blood flow through the filter causes a wall shear rate of the blood between $1,000 \text{ sec}^{-1}$ per seconds and 2,500 per seconds.
18. (Original) A method as in claim 1 wherein the filtration is ultrafiltration.
19. (Original) A method as in claim 1 further comprising minimizing extraction of solutes during filtration.
20. (Original) A method as in claim 1 further comprising extracting primarily water as the fluid removed from the blood during filtration.
21. (Original) A method as in claim 1 wherein blood flows continuously through the filter during periods in which a blood pump is pumping the removed blood.

22. (Original) A method as in claim 1 wherein excess fluid removed from blood flows intermittently from the filter.
23. (Original) A method as in claim 22 wherein a valve in a flow path from the filter for removal of excess fluid cyclically stops and starts the flow of excess fluid from the filter.
24. (Original) A method as in claim 1 wherein a total amount of extracorporeal blood is not greater than 100 milliliters.
25. (Original) A method as in claim 1 wherein said fiber includes less than 1000 filtering fibers.
26. (Currently Amended) A method as in claim 1 wherein the withdrawn blood removed during step (a) is returned to the patient in step (b) within two minutes.
27. (Currently Amended) A method for removing excess waterfluid from a patient comprising the steps of:
 - a. withdrawing blood from a catheter inserted into a first blood vessel of the patient;
 - b. removing blood directly from a first peripheral blood vessel in the patient monitoring a pressure of the blood being withdrawn and controlling a blood withdrawal rate based on the monitored pressure;
 - bc. condensing the removed withdrawn blood through a filter to separate the excess water from the blood, wherein the filter has filter membrane surface area of no greater than 0.2 m²;

- ed. returning the condensed blood into a second ~~peripheral~~ blood vessel in the patient;
 - de. wherein a blood flow through the filter is less than two percent of a total cardiac output of the patient, and a flow of the excess fluid removed from the blood is no greater than 1.0 liters per hour.
28. (Previously Presented) A method as in claim 27 wherein the excess fluid removed from the blood is no greater than 30 percent of a volume of the removed blood.
29. (Original) A method as in claim 27 wherein the step of filtering is performed by sieving the blood through a filter to remove excess water.
30. (Original) A method as in claim 27 further comprising the step of pumping the removed blood with a blood pump at a rate of less than 100 milliliters (ml) per minute.
31. (Original) A method as in claim 27 wherein a rate of the removal of blood is no greater than 60 milliliters per minute, and a rate of removal of the excess water is no greater than 16 milliliters per minute.
32. (Previously Presented) A method as in claim 27 wherein a rate of the removal of blood is in a range of 40 to 60 milliliters per minute, and a rate of removal of the excess water is no greater than 16 milliliters per minute.
33. (Cancelled) .

34. (Currently Amended) A method as in claim 30 wherein the blood pump stops upon detection of a blockage of blood flow in the blood being removed in step (ab).
35. (Currently Amended) A method as in claim 30 wherein the blood pump stops upon detection of a air bubble in the blood during any of steps (ab), (bc) and (ed).
36. (Original) A method as in claim 27 wherein the first peripheral blood vessel is a vein.
37. (Original) A method as in claim 27 wherein the second peripheral blood vessel is a vein.
38. (Original) A method as in claim 27 wherein the first and second peripheral blood vessel are the same vein.
39. (Original) A method as in claim 27 wherein the filter includes capillary, hollow fibers.
40. (Original) A method as in claim 39 wherein the hollow fibers have filtering pores which retain in the blood solutes greater than 50,000 Daltons.
41. (Original) A method as in claim 39 wherein the hollow fibers have blood passages of approximately 0.2 mm or less in diameter.
42. (Currently Amended) A method as in claim 38 wherein the filter has a trans-membrane pressure (TMP) no greater than 250 millimeters (mm) of mercury (Hg).

43. (Original) A method as in claim 27 wherein the blood flow through the filter causes a shear rate of the blood between $1,000 \text{ sec}^{-1}$ per seconds and 2,500 per seconds.
44. (Original) A method as in claim 27 wherein the filtration is ultrafiltration.
45. (Original) A method as in claim 27 further comprising minimizing extraction of solutes during filtration.
46. (Original) A method as in claim 27 wherein blood flows continuously through the filter during periods in which a blood pump is pumping the removed blood.
47. (Original) A method as in claim 27 wherein excess water removed from the blood flows intermittently from the filter.
48. (Original) A method as in claim 47 wherein a valve in a flow path from the filter for removal of excess water cyclically stops and starts the flow of excess water from the filter.
- 49 through 54 (Cancelled).
55. (New) A method for filtering blood comprising:
 - Withdrawing blood from an adult patient;
 - Filtering the withdrawn blood in a filter having an active filter membrane surface of no greater than 0.2 millimeters squared to remove filtrate from the blood, and
 - Infusing treated blood into the adult patient.

56. (New) A method as in claim 55 wherein the active filter membrane surface is no greater than 0.1 m^2 .

57. (New) A method as in claim 55 further comprising removing the filtrate at a rate no greater than one liter per hour.

58. (New) A method as in claim 55 further comprising withdrawing the blood in a range of 10 to 60 milliliters per minute.

59. (New) A method as in claim 55 further comprising passing the blood through a blood circuit comprising the filter during a residence time period of no greater than 120 seconds.

60. (New) A method as in claim 55 further comprising passing the blood through filter fibers having a length of at least 20 centimeters:

61. (New) A method as in claim 55 further comprising passing the blood through a bundle of filter fibers having at least 620 fibers.

62. (New) A method as in claim 55 wherein said filter has a length of at least 20 cm and an internal diameter of no greater than 1.5 cm.

63. (New) A method as in claim 55 further comprising a shear rate of blood flowing through the filter of at least 1000 per second.

64. (New) A filter for an extracorporeal blood circuit having an input for blood withdrawn from a human patient and a blood output for filtered blood to be infused into the patient, said filter comprising:

a filter body having a length of at least 20 centimeters (cm) and an interior diameter of no greater than 1.5 cm;

an input at a first end of the body to receive the withdrawn blood;

an output at a second end of the body to discharge the filtered blood;

a filter membrane in the body defining a blood passage through the body, wherein the membrane has an active filter membrane surface area of no greater than 0.2 meters squared (m^2), and

a filtrate output to the body and open to a side of the filter surface area opposite to the blood passage.

65. (New) A filter as in claim 64 wherein the active filter membrane surface area is no greater than $0.1 m^2$.

66. (New) A method as in claim 64 wherein a volume of the blood passage in the filter is less than two percent of a cardiac output of an adult.

67. (New) A method as in claim 64 wherein the filter membrane surface is an interior surface of a bundle of filter fibers.

68. (New) A method as in claim 67 wherein the filter fibers have a length of at least 20 centimeters.

69. (New) A method as in claim 67 wherein the bundle of filter fibers has at least 620 fibers.